

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) As per the DGCI&S data the level of imports during 1994-95, 1995-96 and 1996-97 (Provisional) are US \$ 28654 million US \$ 36678 million and US \$ 38548 million. Exports during the same period were to the tune of US \$ 26330 million, US \$ 31797 million US \$ 33106 million.

The details of country-wise imports and exports trade are voluminous and are available in Monthly Publication "Statistics of the Foreign Trade of India by Countries" Vol.I & Vol.II published by DGCI&S, Calcutta and which are also placed in the Parliament Library.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) As per data available from Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas, the import of petroleum products during 1994-95 and 1995-96 and 1996-97(P) are US \$ 5712.89 million and 7155.92 million and US \$ 9616.48 million respectively. These accounted for 19.9%, 19.5% and 24.9% of total imports in the respective years.

(e) Imports are made as per the needs of the economy. The policy framework as prevalent at present is aimed at promoting exports.

Hindi Advisory Committee

5429. SHRI JAGDAMBI PRASAD YADAV: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Official Language Advisory Committee has been constituted in the Ministry of Coal;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor and the time by which it is likely to be constituted?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): (a) to (c) The term of Hindi Salahkar Samiti of the Ministry has expired on 22.9.1996. A New Samiti is being reconstituted. The Ministry of coal has sent a Resolution letter to the Ministry of Home Affairs (Department of Official Language) for giving final approval to the Constitution of this Committee. After receipt of their approval, the Samiti would be reconstituted.

Foreign Trade

5430. DR. RAMVILAS VEDANTI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the countries with which the foreign trade of India increased during each of the last three years alongwith the details of items thereof; country-wise;

(b) whether the Government propose to boost foreign trade; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) The country's foreign trade has shown an increase during the last three years. Imports have increased from US \$ 23.3 billion in 1993-94 to US \$ 28.7 billion in 1994-95, to US \$ 36.7 billion in 1995-96 and US \$ 38.5 billion in 1996-97 (Provisional). Exports during the same period have increased from US \$ 22.2 billion in 1993-94 to US \$ 26.3 billion in 1994-95, to US \$ 31.8 billion in 1995-96 and to US \$ 33.1 billion in 1996-97 (Provisional). India has trade relations with almost all the countries in the world and covering a large number of items. The details of countrywise and commodity wise trade are voluminous and are contained in the monthly publication "Statistics of the Foreign Trade of India by Countries" Vol.I & Vol.II published by DGCI&S, Calcutta and which are also available in the Parliament Library.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Export promotion is a continuous process and steps are initiated by the Government to promote exports through simplification of policies and procedures, improving bilateral trade, debottlenecking of export infrastructure, and enhancing the quality and competitive edge of Indian products.

[English]

Cases admitted by Lok Adalats

5431. SHRI T. GOPAL KRISHNA: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cases taken up by the Lok Adalats during each of the last two years, State-wise;

(b) the number of cases settled and the number of persons convicted; and

(c) the nature of offence and punishment awarded, State-wise/year-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP): (a) to (c) The information with regard to number of cases taken up and cases settled by the Lok Adalats during each of the last two years, State-wise is being collected from the State Legal Aid & Advice Boards and would be laid on the Table of the House when received.

Only such of the criminal cases which are compoundable with the permission of the Court are being taken by the Lok Adalats where the question of conviction punishment awarded does not arise.

Trade Deficit

5432. PROF. AJIT KUMAR MEHTA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state;

(a) whether there is sharp increase in the country's trade deficit;

(b) if so, the percentage of rise in the trade deficit since January, 1997;